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ABSTRACT

This publication summarizes a discussion memorandum published in June 1975 by the Dutch Minister of Education and Science and the two state secretaries of education and science (higher education and secondary education). The memorandum is an initial proposal for setting educational policy and shaping Dutch education over the next 20 to 25 years. As such, it is intended primarily to stimulate discussion and comment among Dutch educators. Main focus of the memorandum is on defining broad educational policy and restructuring the Dutch educational system to reflect changing social conditions and educational needs. Eventually, the Ministry of Education and Science intends to develop the discussion memorandum into a definite legislative proposal for presentation to the Dutch Parliament. (JG)

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Contours of a future education system in the Netherlands

Summary of a discussion memorandum

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Contours of a future education system in the Netherlands

Summary of a discussion memorandum

The contours of a coherent education system to be introduced into the Netherlands before the year 2000 – this is the subject of a lengthy discussion memorandum published on 18 June by the Minister of Education and Science, Dr. J. A. van Kemenade, and the two State Secretaries of Education and Science, Dr. G. Klein (higher education) and Dr. A. Veerman (secondary education).

The memorandum, entitled 'Contours of a future education system', is intended as an initial proposal addressed to Dutch educational circles. Organisations and individuals are invited to submit their comments to the Minister before 1 August 1976 and in this way to take part in discussion on the education system that the Minister and State Secretaries wish to see. They will look at the memorandum again in the light of the comments and revise it as they think desirable. This will be followed by a second round of discussions. On the basis of these, a firmer proposal will be formulated and presented to Parliament.

Broader educational objectives

There has been a shift in the objectives and in the function of education over the years, as is very clearly apparent from the considerations underlying succeeding attempts to raise the schoolleaving age, successful or otherwise, ever since 1806.

At first the overriding consideration was the protection of the most defenceless members of society against exploitation; later the emphasis fell on the need for skilled and professional manpower, while, in the last ten years especially, the right of the individual to develop his full potential and the need to prepare him for a place in society in the broadest sense have gained the upper hand.

This shift in educational objectives, and thus in the educational system and its content, has of course not happened by chance. It is determined very largely by the opportunities available, the demands made and the views held by society or in certain parts of it. So education will always be on the move, because society is constantly changing partly under the influence of that very education. This is a process that was not begun yesterday and will continue forever.

Two-way influence between education and society

Education is not above time and place. It is a part of that very society which leaves its stamp on it. The social conditions and values prevailing in a society are reflected in its educational system and the content and methods used in the system, and in the interest shown in education by parents and pupils. They also limit the power of education to introduce changes in society. For instance, the opportunities for everyone to make use of educational facilities are not only decided by the organisation and nature of the education system itself but by the income of the parents, the home background of the pupils and the amenities available in the neighbourhood.

Thus the measure in which education can and will devote attention to developing a range of human characteristics is dependent on the value placed on those characteristics by society. This value is expressed in income and power and thus determines to a large extent the interest of parents and pupils in certain school achievements. But education is not dependent on its social surroundings alone. It can also influence the development of society

and in fact has done so. Thanks to the schools, the level of education of broad strata of the population has risen considerably. Partly due to the schools, knowledge and culture are no longer a monopoly of the few, prosperity has increased and the old sharp distinction between social classes has become blurred. Thanks to education, the desire and also the opportunity to participate in decision-making at work, in the neighbourhood, in the municipality or at national level has increased.

Though education cannot of itself create new social conditions and more equality in society, it can make a major contribution. And a sound education system is definitely an essential condition for the success of a policy designed to achieve these things.

The importance of education to the individual and society

It is therefore of great importance to consider how and to what extent education should contribute to the further development of equality in society and to consider the changes needed in the system to achieve it. This is probably truer nowadays than it has ever been, because the importance of education to people and society has become steadily greater and social changes are more basic and taking place more rapidly.

A grasp of the ever more intricate issues in society is hardly possible without a fairly lengthy period of education and training. The articulateness and resiliance needed by the citizens of a democratic society require continuous education in length and breadth.

The position people acquire in society and the power they derive from it are determined to an increasing extent by the kwowledge and training they possess. The distribution of power and the preservation of democratic control require, more than ever, a fair distribution of educational opportunities.

Kwowledge is changing very fast at present, but so are norms and values, and the requirements of professional life.

People are being faced more and more often and at ever shortening intervals with new choices and new tasks, they are confronted with problems and changed circumstances whose existence they had never even suspected a short time before.

Without adequate education and training that has taught them independence, and without opportunities of making use of educational facilities later in life, many people will be defenceless in the face of these things and will lose their grasp on their own situation.

Education, then, has become an essential factor in maintaining and raising the level of prosperity and welfare in society. At the same time, however, it has become so costly that its unbridled growth could endanger that very prosperity and welfare.

Because of all these factors, more and more will be demanded of education in the future and many changes will be necessary.

Such changes cannot and must not be left to chance. The development and renewal of education require first and foremost a look into the future. This discussion memorandum is an attempt to do this.

Main points

The main points from the discussion memorandum published on 18 June 1975 are:

a. a new primary school for the 4 to 12 age group, to take the place of the present nursery school for 4 and 5 year olds and the primary school for 6 to 12 year olds;
b. a middle school for all 12 to 16 year olds;
c. a high school for those aged 16 and over, with 3 departments:

1. a two-year academic department, which gives direct entry to higher education;
2. a vocational department with a 3 to 4 year ourse, offering training for employment in medium-grade positions;
3. a vocational department with a 2 to 3 year course, offering training for lower grade functions;
d. higher education, on the principle of the coordination of the universities and higher vocational education;
e. the introduction of the open school as the last link in the educational structure;
f. raising of the school-leaving age to 18;
g. special education; fewer types of school and more attention paid to the educational needs of the child.

No decisions yet

The minister and state secretaries emphatically state that the realisation of the ideas in the memorandum is still completely open. 'The memorandum is not intended to be more than a contribution to a discussion regarding changes in the education system in the coming twenty to twenty-five years'.

The plans may yet be altered considerably after the contribution of the many people interested have been incorporated, and their validity will also have to be tested in experiments, while the financial consequences will also have to be closely examined.

The effects on the budget and on the national economy will have to be carefully looked at and will have to form part of future consideration of possibilities and priorities. The creation of opportunities for education and training for many people who have thus far been deprived of them will require great sacrifices. At present educational expenditure already accounts for about 28% of the Dutch national budget.

Consequently, the authors of the memorandum expressly put forward various radical measures to cut down costs. 'Better education for many cannot and need not be more expensive education. We must however be aware that probably much of which we are proposing here will only be possible if economies are made at the same time; not least within education itself.' The authors go on to remark that the proposals they have worked out mean putting a knife into the whole social system. They may have drastic effects on many areas of policy. They point out, for example, that those who are receiving education and training, can make little of any contribution to the economic production process.

Recommendations

Putting the proposals into effect is therefore dependent on policy choices which do not lie only in the policy area of the Minister of Education and Science. Consequently, recommendations on the memorandum will be sought from the Provisional Scientific Council for Government Policy, the Socio-Economic Council, the Education Council, the Council for Youth Education, the Central Planning Office, the Socio-Cultural Planning Office and the Educational Planning Office (at present being set up). In addition, the broad ministererial consultations will be continued. The resulting recommendations and the outcome of the consultations will be incorporated in a later memorandum.

Why

The reasons behind the memorandum are explained in full in the first part. In the opinion of the statesmen concerned education is constantly getting new responsibilities allotted to it. The reason for this, they think, is that more

and more demands are being made on the social functioning of each one of us. So education can no longer be confined to teaching the skills and understanding needed for exercising a profession. It must also be designed to prepare people to take part in other social activities, such as decision making at work, in the district, in the municipality or at national level.

Education must offer to all members of society the opportunity to develop their very different talents. It must make everyone more articulate and resilient and thus give them more access to knowledge, work and above all, decision-making.

Postponing the choice of school

The authors of the memorandum feel that education must be thoroughly reformed in the long term if there is to be a better distribution of social opportunities.

In the first place, school and neighbourhood, school and parents, in short school environment and home environment should be brought closer together. Education and upbringing should reinforce each other as much as possible.

In the second place, preselection at an early stage must be avoided. This means that the education system must be such that children do not have to make a choice from a number of separate schools as early as their twelfth or thirteenth year which is usually final and determines to a great extent their position in society for the rest of their lives.

The education system should be such that vital decisions of this kind can be postponed to the fifteenth or sixteenth year, when individual capacities have come more clearly to the fore. Until then there should be plenty of scope for courses adapted to individual differences in rate of working, interest and ability courses which can be flexibly matched to the many changes that are likely to occur in these respects in the age-group in question.

In the third place, nursery and primary education must be arranged in such a way that it can more easily take account of the stages of development the children have reached and of differences in their social and cultural backgrounds.

Among the requirements for this are the elimination of the distinction between nursery school and primary school, doing away with the subject matter/age/class system and developing teaching methods more geared to individual abilities and experience.

Finally there must be facilities for second chance education which are readily accessible.

Danger

The authors of the memorandum then point out the danger of increasing social inequality between people with different gifts or different educational standards. 'Educational change which only brings about more equal opportunities for a new social inequality although it may well solve the present inequality in social relations, runs the risk of evoking a new and possibly more distinct social dichotomy.'

They therefore believe that an education policy which aims at more equality must not be confided to the creation of equal opportunities for participation in educational facilities for different individuals or groups. It must moreover be designed to improve the opportunities for developing different gifts and especially to improve the articulateness and social resilience of all, regardless of their gifts.'

The authors note here that the emergence of a new social inequality cannot be prevented by education policy alone. It also depends on the measure in which society accords income, power and prestige to certain educational achievements.

Structure

The above principles are reflected in the content and structure of basic education for children from 4 to 16 years of age and of further education. The authors divide basic education into three types of school, i.e. the new primary school intended for children from 4 to 12 years of age, special schools, and the middle school for all pupils aged between 12 and 16 years. For further education they suggest a high school for young people aged between 16 and 19 years.

After high school there is higher education for those suited for it. At high school standard and above there should also be a series of facilities for further education for people to make use of for their whole lives. These include facilities enabling people to make up for missed educational opportunities (second chance education). On reaching school-leaving age at 18 young people have the opportunity of combining further education with a full-time or part-time job (second road to education).

The new primary school

As has alreay been said, the new primary education is intended for girls and boys aged from 4 to 12 years. This first stage of basic education, taking 8 years, is designed to achieve the continuous development of the pupils. Allowance is also made for individual differences exhibited by the pupils in passing through the successive stages of development.

The authors point out a number of difficulties likely to be encountered on the way to achieving a new primary school:

- The transfer from nursery school to ordinary primary school is determined by the calendar age of the children and is therefore a handicap to their continuous development.
- The subject matter/year/class system does not allow for individual differences in development potential.
- Affective, expressive and creative training, and learning to master social skills, are too little emphasised.
- The strict division into subjects does not tally with the image of the world held bij nursery children and primary school children.
- School is insufficiently adapted to the use of language, the behaviour standards and the pattern of life of the pupils.
- Periods of marking time in the development process are too little recognised. Sometimes children are referred too readily to special schools.

Features

A foreign language should be compulsory for all children at the new primary school. Other features are:

- the development of the personality of each child in an uninterrupted process of education, development and learning;
- the creation of equal opportunities;
- adequate attention paid to the individual identity of the nursery child and that of the child in subsequent phases of development;
- prompt recognition and examination of periods of marking time in the development and learning process and offering suitable help to individual pupils;
- the creation of learning and teaching situations adapted to the aptitude of the pupils.

Measures

The statesmen announce the following measures:
– A form of nursery and primary teaching will have to be worked out which integrates the educational objectives of the two separate systems.
– Special statutory measures will have to be taken for integral experiments, cooperation experiments and isolated experiments.
– Measures at administrative level, considering the fact that primary schools receive children from various nursery schools, so that many problems will have to be solved.

Special education

Special education covers all the educational facilities for children with a handicap of a mental, physical or social nature and therefore incapable of following the teaching at an ordinary primary or middle school.

The statesmen urge that primary school and middle school facilities should be such that fewer children have to be referred to special schools. A flexible set of special education facilities must help to ensure that problem children are only removed entirely from ordinary schools in extreme cases.

The number of types of special school will have to be reduced from about 20 to just a few. The distinction between the types of school is at present based largely on medical criteria. Insufficient account is taken of the educational needs of the children.

Clear referral and admission criteria will have to be applied for children who are thought eligible for special education. A distinction between primary education and middle school education is not thought desirable for special schools. The authors have in mind four types of special education:
– motor oriented education. This type of education is meant for children who are destined, through faulty powers of reasoning, to occupy those jobs where motoric and manual achievements predominate over intellectual ones.
– remedial education, for preparing children to return to ordinary primary school.
– compensatory education, for children with organic disorders.
– therapeutic education, for children with mental disorders.
The authors feel that in the long term efforts must be made to integrate ordinary and special education, especially in the educational sense.

Furthermore, they wish to take the necessary measures in the matter of curriculum development, the initial training and in-service training of teachers, school building and teaching aids. The staff of school advisory services for special education will also have to be increased.

Teachers in special schools will need to have specialised training in addition to their ordinary primary school teacher training.

In addition, there will have to be new training courses at new national institutes for teachers giving very special help.

Any increase in the number of types of school in the near future will be stopped. The merging of two or more types of school will be encouraged. The same applies to integration where this is educationally justified.

The middle school

After primary school, in the new education system, children go to the middle school. For the time being the statesmen have opted for a middle school for all children from 12 to 16 years of age, so that there will be no other schools for this age group. They do feel however the experiments will have to show whether an age group of 11 to 15 might not be better. Just as in the new primary school, the emphasis in the middle school will be on

developing the knowledge and skills which everyone needs to be able to function properly in society.

In the case of the middle school this includes:
- orientation for the pupils for their later choice of study or profession; and
- the provisional determination, subject to modification, of the pupils' abilities in this regard.

In the middle school all pupils will be placed in unselected age groups regardless of their abilities or backgrounds. These are called heterogeneous age groups. The children will then be placed in different groups for various subjects according to their ability and interests (the homogeneous groups).

A development report will be drawn for each pupil as he gets to the end of the middle school. This will include his level of achievement, skills, gifts and interests. It will also contain indications of his capacity for further study and his choice of profession.

Point of departure

As the main principles of the middle school the authors state:
- A complete group of pupils of one age range will follow a common course of general and vocational education irrespective of their aptitude and background or achievements up to then. This does not mean that all pupils in one year would be offered all parts of the course at the same level. The statesmen reject a unified school of this kind out of hand. 'The less gifted children would be failures, the gifted children would be held back and the average child would become the norm.' Breaking down the barriers in the present categorial system must not in their opinion be allowed to bring about uniformity and levelling down. 'On the contrary, a new form of education must emerge in which every individual pupil can develop his personality according to his ability interest and skill.'
- The postponement of the choice of further study or of vocation to a later date.
- Continuation of the endeavours of the primary school to offer equal, i.e. optimal opportunities for development.
- Broadening the subject matter offered to 12 to 16 year olds.
- Offering teaching and learning situations suitable for individual development and for arousing social awareness.

Features

The main features of the middle school, based on the above principles, are formulated as follows:

a. early, unilateral selection will be avoided as much as possible and replaced bij a system of placement in a number of different ability groups (the homogeneous groups);

b. the time of the more or less final choice of further study and profession will be postponed if possible until after the 16th year;

c. equality of opportunity, that is to say real opportunities for development for all pupils, will be made the central tenet as much as possible;

d. not only intellectual and technical qualities will count, but certainly also creative , artistic, organisational and social qualities;

e. the learning processes are geared as far as possible to varying types of pupil.

Mixed ability grouping

The authors of the memorandum regard Mixed ability grouping as the ideal which the middle school must endeavour to achieve. But they see many

difficulties in the way. They remark that it is a question of navigating carefully and cautiously between Scylla and Charybdis. The dangers to be avoided are:
– If every middle school leaver can and is allowed to begin on every course of further education, every high school course must start at the minimum level of the slowest and least gifted pupil. This is impossible, if only because the financial resources are limited.
– If the further education courses are allowed to set their own requirements in the matter of previous education in the middle school (as stated in the development report) there is a considerable chance that in fact streaming will be dictated from outside in spite of the mixed ability labels.
The statesmen urge that the ideal of mixed ability grouping be realised as far as possible by many and various experiments.

High school

Attendance at middle school should be followed, according to the memorandum, by attendance at high school for 16 to 19 year olds. The following three departments are listed for the high school:
– an academic stream, one of whose aims is to prepare students for higher education. Courses in this department would be of 2 years duration.
– a vocational stream with a course of three or four years. This department would prepare students for medium grade functions. On special conditions referring to the final level obtained, it would be possible for students to go on to certain higher education courses.
– a vocational stream with courses of short duration, offering training for lower grade functions. The courses in this department would take 2 or 3 years. Students from this stream could also go on to further study on certain conditions, i.e. the longer vocational courses.
This would be a new type of school very much geared to social reality.

Emphasis must also be laid on the independence of the students. The accent would shift from teaching to self-study. The statesmen describe the didactic principles in the high school as self-study under supervision.

The aim of the high school education must be to see that the students leave at 18 as adult members of society and responsible citizens of a democratic community.

The authors list a number of sectors to which the high school could be directed:
– social service
– science and technology
– the commercial, economic and administrative sector
– agriculture
– the literary and communications sector
– the arts.
The authors of the memorandum think that a system would be suitable similar to the structure of what is now called 'participation education', i.e. learning while participating in adult life. There would thus be a number of independent high schools per region for one or more sectors with a common regional service centre and regional cooperation arrangements. The service centre would also house information services for the students. It would also make the necessary arrangements with industry and other authorities. These would concern, for example training in industry and visits needed for learning while participating. Expensive equipment that would be used by schools jointly would also be housed in the centre.

At the moment the statesmen would prefer to see the high schools in the form of combined schools with three departments, i.e.:
– an academic department with a two-year course;
– a vocational department with a three to four-year course;
– a vocational department with a two to three-year course.

The departments would each run a number of courses with their own core syllabuses of which the nature and level is described. But within each course optional subjects at various levels and/or of various kinds may also be chosen. The courses in core and optional subjects would lead to the award of a comprehensive certificate which would have varying civil effects according to the course in question or its minimum requirements and to the optional subjects chosen.

As we have said, the authors of the memorandum would prefer to see the high schools with three streams. Only then, they believe, can easy transfer be promoted and canalisation be avoided. In this way the social divisions between different groups of 16 to 19 year olds can be counteracted.

In practice, it will not always be possible to offer all three streams in one high school. They therefore propose a minimum of two streams. If these are the two vocational streams, arrangements should be made for cooperation with a high school in the same sector containing an academic stream. Some such arrangement is necessary in order to ensure easy transfer between the departments.

Higher education

Higher education is concerned with students aged over 18. It is no longer exclusively for students who are continuing their studies immediately after leaving high school. Mature students will also be admitted. They will include those who are alternating work with study and those who wish to make up later for the chances of higher education they missed earlier.

The statesmen believe that in principle everyone should be admitted to higher education who wants it and is suited for it. But they add that not everyone can take part in higher education where, how, and for as long as he will. Higher education must offer a great variety of courses.

A successful university career no longer guarantees a prominent position in society. A fixed relationship between graduating and employment will become increasingly less common. The labour market for graduates will no longer be a closed shop of suitable work, processing scarcity value and therefore highly paid.

If selection based on prognosis and drawing lots offer no permanent solution, the only thing remaining is selection on the grounds of separately required and proved achievements.

The present segregation in the Netherlands of university education (w.o.) and higher vocational education (h.b.o.) must be dispensed with. This can be done in two ways:

1. by seeking coordination between w.o. and h.b.o. in a link between courses rather than in formal contacts between institutions,
2. by refusing to accept the absence of coordination in the matter of facilities.

Distinction according to curricula

The heart of the proposal in the memorandum is that students should be able to transfer in either direction and at any time during their courses, based on the arrangement of w.o. and h.b.o. side by side in the place of the one being subordinate to the other. This means that the primary distinction according to institution will be replaced by a primary distinction according to course. Looked at in the long term, higher education will have to offer a large number of courses: general education courses in addition to vocational training courses, courses for teaching skills in addition to methodologically oriented courses, courses drawn up individually in addition to standardised and collective courses.

Setting this pattern against various fields of learning, the statesmen see five kinds of courses for the future: research courses; training courses for

which university training is required; training courses for which this is not the case; general educational courses in which methodology has pride of place and courses in which general and specific practical skills are taught.

The courses of the five kinds will then be filled in with the subject matter of one or more disciplines.

The statesmen do not feel that it is an obvious step to endeavour to integrate the universities and higher vocational education institutes. They feel it is better to reform each sector by itself. The guiding principle must be to increase the variety. This has proved to be possible only on a limited scale within the existing institutes, and they consider that this will remain so in the future. They therefore put forward a proposal to introduce a new kind of higher education institute in addition to the universties.

The principal feature of the new type of higher education will be a very large variety of courses. This means that university type and higher vocational type courses must be offered side by side. A well thought out policy regarding facilities must ensure that the new institutes are made attractive. They will accommodate principally courses which have at present been insufficiently developed. The new higher education institutes will form the growth sector par excellence and they must widen the objectives of higher education.

These proposals will be elaborated in a policy memorandum on higher education to be issued shortly.

Open school

The final component of the new education structure is the open school, the organisation which will coordinate all facilities for further training and education after completion of a conventional education, and will offer some of them itself.

Everyone must be able to continue to learn throughout his life and to reorientate himself through training, study, discussion and reflection. Educational facilities are needed for this. Facilities accessible to everyone and which will thus be suitably distributed and tailored to the needs and situations in the life and work of all adults living in the Netherlands. There is to be an open school in order to guarantee that these facilities are offered systematically. A system of suitable educational and other facilities will be provided as an alternative for young people on reaching school-leaving age: this is called the second road to education. It will have to be linked as closely as possible to the practical experience of the participants in their jobs and professions.

Educational leave

It must be possible to convert what has been learned in this way into credits counting towards examinations. Suitable arrangements for educational leave will have to be designed for this group of students, so that they can get compensation for part of their study time. Where necessary curricula will have to be spread over a longer time than in comparable courses of full-time education. The maximum length of time for which anyone may be registered for further education courses will have to be extended for these participants.

In short, better conditions must be created in the long run in order to achieve a suitable system of educational facilities for adults.

The open school committee will issue recommendations on the subject. In addition, two other committees will be consulted. These are the Committee for the Promotion of Local Educational Networks, which will advise on the infrastructure of educational facilities for adults in this country, and an

Educational Leave Committee which will concern itself with arrangements for granting time off for study purposes for people in employment.

Among the features of future adult education will be:

– optimal accessibility, through the mass media and the network of educational centres, for example;
– integrated education and training, based on learning by experience;
– openness of admission, curricula and graduation, with options such as single subject certificates and courses not leading to a qualification;
– a systematcic series of courses, for which the open school will be responsible.

Educational centres

As we have seen, a network of educational centres will be needed. The centres must see that opportunities for further education are offered all over the country in addition to and following up conventional education. But not only that. The centres will also encourage processes of renewal in their regions. At present the idea is to make use of the facilities in the existing educational infrastructure, such as schools neighbourhood centres and club houses, educational institutes, libraries, and associations having educational activities. These centres – which will probably serve an area with 250,000 to 300,000 inhabitants each (the population of the Netherlands is 13,000,000) – will form the headquarters of work for an integral educational policy for adults at local or regional level.

The school as a community

The school cannot and must not be a closed system, administratively or in any other way, say the statesmen. 'The interest of the national community, and also of local communities, especially in private education, goes further than the immediate involvement of those who work and live in the school.'

They urge a sound communication structure in the school. The influence of pupils on the teaching and learning process and their involvement and co-determination in the teaching arrangements should automatically be part of the school work plan and of the school organisation. Two factors play a part here, i.e. the age of the pupils and the nature of the teaching and learning process.

The influence of pupils at primary school and the first few years in the middle school will be mainly felt in the choice and planning of many creative and recreational activities.

Older pupils will have to be given more opportunities of making choices with regard to the content of courses and the methods used in teaching. They must also be given a chance to have a say in the way the school is run, of involvement in the appointment of staff and of their own responsibility of the arrangements for many pupil-oriented school activities.

The authors of the memorandum urge the institution of a student council in each school. The council should be consulted when decisions have to be made about the supervision of students, equipment, the appointment of staff and the choice of material.

Teacher's aide

Teachers will also have to acquire a greater influence on what goes on in the schools.

'In the interests both of teachers and of the school and the teaching itself, some sort of specialisation will have to be arranged within the school on the basis of the school work plan.'

The statesmen feel that it is quite possible to arrange for some of the present duties of the teachers, both in the teaching process itself and in the supervision of pupils and in organisational activities, for instance, to be taken over by teacher's aides.

These members of staff would be responsible to the teachers and their job would be to support them.

'The teacher's aide as an institution is as yet not extensively used in Dutch education. but in our opinion it merits much attention in the years to come, partly from the point of view of efficiency.'

The authors of the memorandum also suggest that the teachers should be represented in the competent authority of the school and that a teachers' council should be installed. The duties of the council would be to arrange for the acquisition of material within a certain budget, and to decide on methods of assessment and on teaching methods. The teachers' council should also be involved or consulted in decisions on appointments and the setting out of the school building.

The statemen reject any form of complete self-government by teachers and pupils together. The reason they give for this is that it would not do justice to the general social function which the school has.

They believe that parents and teachers should sit on school boards, but also non-teaching staff, students over the age of 18 and representatives of the community or those parts of the community for which the school operates.

In more concrete terms, they have in mind a school board half of whose members would be representatives of the latter category, and the other half people from the first four categories.

Parent participation

The statesman consider three forms of participation to be important. The first consists of activities by parents in the school which are not directly connected with teaching. As an example they mention help with the internal arrangement of the school building, where parents could work together with teachers and pupils.

The second form of participation concerns activities which are directly in support of teaching. this could consist of parents and children discussing neighbourhood problems in school.

The third form of participation concerns activities in the lessons given to their children. They would supervise some of the activities in the lessons under the responsibility of the teacher. 'The foundations of parent participation are laid in the nursery school. Any educational retardation due to social conditions must be overcome there.'

Learning to teach

In the memorandum the statesmen launch a mumber of ideas on teacher training. There will have to be a new training course for all primary school teachers instead of the present separate courses for nursery school teachers and primary school teachers. The course could have a choice of two specialisms, one for young children from 4 to 8 years of age and one for children from 8 to 12 years of age.

Both men and women could choose either of the two courses. There would also be a training course for middle school teachers. This course would also lead to qualifications for teachers in the practical streams of the high school. The course would be developed from the present new non-university teacher training courses. Finally there would be teacher training courses qualifying teachers for the two-year academic stream of the high school and for certain sectors of higher education. This course would

also train teachers for the more advanced practical stream in the high school. Graduates from this course could also be appointed to middle schools to teach some homogeneous groups of pupils of a fairly high level of abstraction in the final and possibly the penultimate year. the training course would consist of teaching options emerging from the restructuring and reprogramming of university education in the various disciplines and a number of top level training courses in non-university subjects.

Costs and efficiency

The raising of the school-leaving age to 18 years from 1 January 1985 is estimated to bring with it an increase in expenditure of about 350 million guilders in 1985 and about 300 to 350 million guilders in 2000. These figures have been arrived at on the basis of the present level of expenditure; the loss of income from school fees has been allowed for.

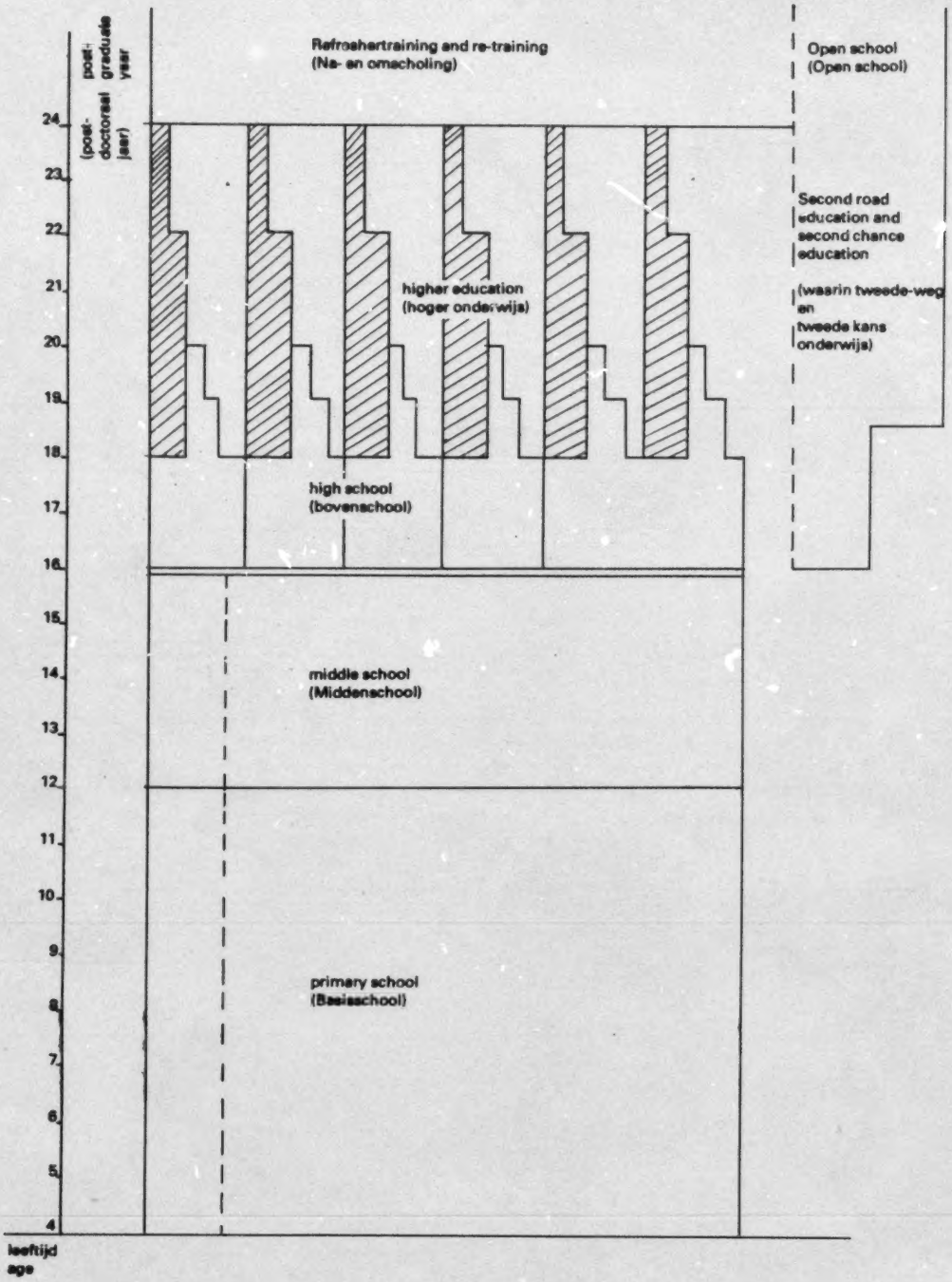
The autonomous increase in the number of pupils in 1985 will already require an increase in expenditure of about 1,050 millions guilders compared with 1975. No allowance has been made in these figures for capital investment in buildings and equipment.

The Minister and State Secretaries of Education and Science remark in the memorandum that it is not possible to give even a rough estimate of the effect that the introduction of the proposals contained in the memorandum might have on educational costs and educational expenditure.

Government expenditure on education has increased in the past fifteen years from 2,000 million guilders to 14,200 million guilders, while it is expected that expenditure will rise to 18,000 million guilders by the year 1978. the Ministry of Education and Science has been responsible for a steadily increasing part of this total expenditure: 71 % in 1960, 85 % (and perhaps even more) in 1975. The government is spending 1,320 guilders per head of the population in 1975. This figure was 175 guilders in 1960. The memorandum shows that the share of nursery and primary education and of general secondary education in total expenditure has clearly dropped between 1960 and 1971.

The share of vocationl education, on the other hand, and that of university education in particular, has increased. This is a shift of emphasis which has pushed up expenditure.

Education and science's share in the total national budget has increased in the past 15 years from 14 % to 25 %.


post-graduate year
(post-doctoraal jaar)
Refreshertraining and re-training
(Na- en omscholing)
Open school
(Open school)
Second road education and second chance education
(waarin tweede-weg en tweede kans onderwijs)
higher education
(hoger onderwijs)
high school
(bovenschool)
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Dependence on population changes

Population forecasts made by the Central Statistical Office put the population of the Netherlands at 16,000,000 in the year 2000 (higher alternative) or 15.4 million (lower alternative).

The age group from 0 to 29 years is the most important from the point of view of education.

If the higher alternative is adhered to, the category of 0 to 14 year olds will increase. But the pressure on the budget margin for education will first be eased further until the eighties, according to an analysis per relevant age group. After that there will be an increase that will reach its zenith in about 1990. From that time onwards the school population will be, in the case of the higher alternative, about at the 1975 level. If this materialises, no budget margin will be formed on average in the coming 25 years with regard to education for childeren of compulsory school age. Moreover the pressure on educational expenditure will increase very much due to the rise in the number of 16 to 19 year olds in the year 1990.

In the case of the lower alternative, the autonomous costs of education would drop very considerably in the years to come as a result of a sharp drop in the mumber of children of compulsory school age. The drop will be modified in the coming 10 years due to the fact that in this period the number of young people in the 15 to 24 age group will in any case increase.

Increasing interest

In addition to the autonomous growth of the population which has a clear effect on participation in education, notably that of children of compulsory school age, there is antoher factor which influences participation in education to a high degree, and that is interest in education. In 1972, 98.8% of 5 tot 9 year olds were attending school full-time, as against 97.9% in 1962.

In 1972, 99.4% of 10 tot 14 year olds were attending school full-time, as against 95.5% in 1962.

The popularity of part-time education during the day among this age group dropped from 0.7% in 1962 to 0.1% in 1972. Of the 15 to 19 year olds, 48.9% were attending school full-time in 1972 as against 32.6% in 1962. The popularity of part-time education during the day among this age groep dropped from 14% in 1962 to 12.7% in 1972.

9.9% of the 20 to 24 age group were in full-time education in 1972 as against 5.7% in 1962. The figures for part-time education during the day were 5.6% in 1972 and 6.2% in 1962.

Of the 25 to 29 year olds, 3.3% were in full-time education in 1972 as against 2.4% in 1968. The figures for part-time education during the day were 3.3% in 1972 as against 2.3% in 1968.

The memorandum also shows that a relative drop can be observed since 1960 in the popularity of vwo, havo and mavo and of junior secondary vocational education. This is counterbalanced by a clear relative increase in the popularity of senoir secondary vocational education, higher vocational education and university education: a shift from relatively inexpensive courses to relatively more costly ones. Experience abroad leads the statesmen to believe 'firmly' that the popularity of secondary and higher education will increase still further in the years to come. Participation in higher education, expressed as a percentage of the total number of 19 to 24 yaer olds, is at present about 15. If the percentage were to rise to 30, that would mean an increase in expenditure between 1975 and 1985 of about 4,000 million guilders and in 2000 3 to 4 thousand million guilders, depending on whether the higher or lower alternative works out. If the percentage of participants were to rise to 40, this would mean an increase in expenditure in 1985 of about 6.5 thousand million guilders and in 2000 of either about 7 thousand millions guilders or about 5.5 thousand million guilders.

More balanced use of educational facilities

In order to avoid a disproportionately large part of the available funds being spent on relatively expensive educational facilities for the relatively few at the cost of the development and/or improvement of educational facilities for all, limits will have to be set to the participation in higher education.

In any event, the restriction of the length of time students are allowed to be registred and the length of time they are allowed to stay in al forms of higher education institutes and in the high schools must be the rule, say the authors. There would also have to be some limit to admissions to higher education establishments.

The statesmen do not consider it wholly out of the question that restricted admission to all disciplines in higher education will be needed in the future. The alternative would be further study by means of cheaper forms of milti-media education. Efforts must also be made to see that the accommodation is used for other purposes in the evenings, weekends and holidays.

Measures to limit admissions will have to be applied with considerable caution. This means that the places needed will have to be found by lowering the average cost per pupil per year.

By far the largest part of the costs are staff costs, and a substantial reduction of these will have to be achieved by reducing the staff-student ratio. It will be necessary in the future to bring about a considerable reduction in teaching density in secondary schools by applying educational technology, and leaving more to the initiative of the older pupils.

No schools fees for children of compulsory school age

It is considered reasonable to charge fees even in the future to those who obtain a demonstrable economic advantage from education.

The Minister and State Secretaries feel however that there can be no question of fees for childeren of compulsory school age.

Moreover, the system of charging fees must be such that it is no obstacle to the participation of students from certain income groups.